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ÆSTHETICS.

From the German of Hegel. Translated for the CRAYON by HORATIO HUBBELL.

ÆSTHETICS IN GENERAL.

As to what relates to the unworthiness of the Art-element in general, to wit, the Apparent and its Delusions, this objection would indeed have its force if the apparent could be pronounced a *non-esse*. Yet the apparent is to the reality the real; the truth were not if it did not appear and seem to appear; when it were not one, not only for itself, but likewise for the spirit especially. Consequently, the apparent cannot in general, but only in the particular art and mode of the apparition by which Art gives a truthful reality to it in itself, become a subject of objection. If in this relation, the Apparent, in which Art molds its conceptions to actual existence, be considered as delusion, then would the same objection hold, according to its sense, comparatively with the appearances of the external world and its immediate materiality as they relate to our own perception; that is, the inner sensated world, to both of which, in empirical life, or the life of our phenomena, we are accustomed to give the name, and attribute the value of *actuality, reality and the true* in contradistinction to Art, which is wanting in that reality and verity. But it is exactly this whole sphere of an empirical internal and external world which, instead of being a world of reality in a stronger sense than the world of Art, is only an appearance, and must be pronounced a stronger delusion. It is beyond the immediateness of the sensations and external objects that we first find the true reality. For the truthful real is only *the by and for itself existing*, the substantial of nature and the spirit, which, indeed, gives itself a present being, but in this being the *by and for itself existing* remains, and thus first becomes the true and real. The controlling power of this general Might is precisely that which Art renders prominent and causes to appear. In the every day external and inner world, real existence appears indeed, yet in the form of a chaos of accidents, encumbered by means of the intermediateness of the sense-impressions and by an arbitrary state of conditions, occurrences, characteristics, etc. The shadowy semblances and delusions of this worthless and transitory world, Art extracts from the real intrinsic contents of the perceptive phenomena, and bestows upon them a higher and more spirit-born reality. Far from being, then, a mere shadowy semblance, to the visions of Art, in contradistinction to common every-day reality, are to be ascribed a higher reality and more absolutely certain existence.

Just so little are the representations of Art to be denominated a deceptive illusion in comparison with the more

veritable descriptive representations of history. For the descriptions of history have no immediate existence, but only the spiritual semblance of that existence as an element of its delineations, and their contents remain trammelled with all the accidental incidents of common reality and its occurrences, its entanglements and individualities; while on the other hand the labor of Art brings before us that eternal Might that controls history without the accompaniment of that immediate sense-derived present and its empty shadowiness!

If, then, the mode in which the forms of Art appear be called a delusion, in comparison, with the mode of thought adopted by philosophy and by the religious and social maxims, so, then, is the form of this appearance, which gains a substantial footing in the realm of thought, most assuredly the truest reality; yet, in comparison with the apparent form of the sense-perceived immediate existence and that of historical record, the vision produced by Art has the preference, because it indicates through itself, and points to something spiritual which, by means thereof, eventuates as an idea, and suggests something external to itself; while, on the contrary, the immediate perception of an object does not hold itself out as a delusion, but rather as what is real and true, while the truthful will be polluted and troubled through the immediate presence of that which is derived from the senses. The tough rind of nature and the every-day world render it more repulsive and difficult for the spirit to penetrate to the ideal, than it is for the works of Art. As to what relates, however, to the objection: that the works of Fine Art are shut off from a scientific thought-imbued consideration, because they derive their origin from an uncontrolled phantasy and tone of feeling, and are illimitable in number and variety, and thus only operate upon the sensibility and imagination, it would seem as though this difficulty had its weight. For, in fact, the beauty of Art manifests itself in a form, which stands directly and expressly opposed to thought, and which, in order to develop its activity in its own way, it is forced to destroy. This idea is connected with the opinion that the real in general, that is, the life of nature and the spirit, is, through the act of comprehending, disfigured and destroyed, and instead of being brought nearer to us through a process of thought suitable to the idea, will be actually thereby further removed. So that man, by means of thinking, used as a mode of grasping that which has life, will rather fail in that aim. We cannot, in this place, expand this subject, but only give the point of view from which this difficulty or impossibility and awkward subject may be set aside. So much, however, will be admitted, that to look into the human spirit we must rely upon our own con-

sciousness, and the mind must be capable of turning its thought in upon itself and upon all that springs out of it. *For it is thought that constitutes the real intrinsic nature of the spirit.* In this thinking consciousness of and about itself and its productions, no matter how much freedom and self-will, in fact, it may have, (provided it is only true therein,) yet the spirit holds itself commensurate to its real nature. Art and its productions, as that which has sprung from and been generated by the spirit, are themselves of a spiritual essence, although their representation assumes the appearance of the external sensible and pervades that external throughout with traces of the spirit.

In this relation, Art lies nearer the mind and its thought than mere external soulless nature; the productions of Art have to do only with their own. And although the creations of Art are not thought and comprehension, but rather a development of the comprehension out of itself, and what may be designated an estrangement or segregation from that which we receive from the senses, yet the power and might of the thinking spirit lies therein, not perhaps apprehending itself in its own peculiar form as thinking, but in such a way as to again recognize itself—in its negation of perception and the sense impressions; in other words, to apprehend itself in its altered condition, while it changes that which we have designated as estrangement to thought, and thus returns to itself. And the thinking spirit while thus employed with its other self, will not, indeed, become so untrue to itself, as to forget and lose itself therein, nor is it so powerless as not to comprehend what is different from it; but, on the contrary, it apprehends itself and its opposite. For the comprehension is the power of generalization, which preserves itself in the midst of its severances—extending its grasp over itself and its duplicate, and thus has the power and capacity to again do away with that estrangement or segregation to which it was previously progressing. Thus does the created of Art, in which thought negates itself, belong to the realm of the comprehending faculty of the spirit, and while it subjects itself to scientific consideration, satisfies by thus doing its own most peculiar nature. For since thinking is its being and domain of action, it is finally only satisfied when all the products of its activity are saturated with thought, and thus are truly transformed into its own nature. Art, however far removed (as we shall more distinctly see) from being the highest form of the spirit, first receives from science its genuine verification.

Thus Art does not from an arbitrary lawlessness refuse itself to philosophic consideration. For, as we have already intimated, its real mission is to subject the highest interests of the spirit to consciousness. Hence it arises, directly as it regards its intrinsic matter, that the Fine Art cannot range about in the unfettered wildness of the fantasy, for those interests of the spirit establish certain determinable halting points for the matter of its contents, let the forms and figures be ever so various and inexhaustible. The same observation will apply to the forms themselves—they are not abandoned

to mere accident. It is not every form that is capable of representing and expressing those interests—to take them up and again render them—and for every determinate mass of contents a suitable form is also determined.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

ERRATA.—In the number for June, article "Æsthetics," on page 166, second column, 16th line from the bottom, instead of "when art," read simply "art," omitting the word *when*. On page 167, first column, 24th line from the top, strike out the words "if denied."

WOULD YOU?

COULD you keep the tints of spring
On the woods, a mist of brightness;
Keep the half-veiled boughs a-swing
To some fitting wild-bird's lightness;
Through the birch-leaves' rippling green
Hold the maple-keys from dropping;
On the sward with May-showers clean
Cheat the violets into stopping;

COULD you make the rosebud's lips
Vow to be a bud forever;
From the sedges' wavering tips
Let the pendent dew drop never;
Could you bid the sunrise hour
For a life-time overbrood you;
Could you change the year's full dower
For its first faint promise—would you?

THOUGH a bubbling cup we quaff
From the crystal fount of morning,
When the world is all a laugh
And a welcome without warning,
At life's Cana-feast the guest
Lingering on, with thirst unsated,
Finds a later draught the best;
Miracles—when thou hast waited.

THOUGHT must shade and sun the soul
With its glorious mutations;
Every life-song is a whole
Sweeter for its variations.
Wherefore with your bliss at strife?
'Twas an angel that withstood you.
Could you give your perfect life
For a dream of living—would you?

LUCY LAROOM.

MANY have yet to learn the apparently simple truth, that to an Artist his Art is his means of probation in this life; and that, whatever it may have of frivolity to us, to him it is as the two or the five talents, to be accounted for hereafter. I might say much on this point, for the full scope of the word Art seems by some to be even now unrecognized. Before the period of printing, Art was the largest mode of permanently recording human thought; it was spoken in every epoch, in all countries, and delivered in almost every material. In buildings, on medals and coins, in porcelain and earthenware, on wood, ivory, parchment, paper and canvas, the graver or the pencil has recorded the ideas of every form of society, of every variety of race, and of every character. What wonder that the Artist is jealous of his craft, and proud of his brotherhood?—*Dr. Acand.*